



Representative Candice S. Miller
Michigan's 10th Congressional District
Committee on House Administration - Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security - Vice Chair
Subcommittee on Border & Maritime Security - Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

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Rep. Miller Introduces Legislation to Prevent Asian Carp from Invading Great Lakes

WASHINGTON – Today, U.S. Representative Candice Miller (MI-10) issued the following statement after introducing the Defending Against Aquatic Invasive Species Act of 2014, authorizing swift, preventative action to stop Asian carp from invading the Great Lakes:

"Over 100 years ago the Great Lakes and Mississippi River watersheds were connected to assist the city of Chicago in dealing with their sewage problems. That should never have been allowed to happen and certainly would never be allowed today. The connection of these two watersheds creates many problems including the diversion of large amounts of Great Lakes water out of the Great Lakes basin and providing a route for invasive species like the Asian Carp to enter the Great Lakes. This must end.

"The Asian carp threat is particularly troubling. Over the last number of years these invaders have been migrating up the Mississippi River, destroying ecosystems along the entire route, and defying numerous actions taken to stop their advance. Now, this invasive species threatens our precious Great Lakes – and if they are allowed to take hold they would cause untold economic harm and change our very way of life along the shores of the Great Lakes.

"Completely separating the watersheds, an option presented by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers earlier this year, was identified by an independent study to be the most foolproof method of preventing these destructive invaders from entering our Great Lakes. Unfortunately, the Corps indicated that they did not have the legal authority to build such a barrier.

"Today, I introduced legislation that would give the Corps the authorization to design and construct a barrier that would completely separate the Mississippi River watershed from Lake Michigan and the Great Lakes basin because I believe total separation is the only way to make sure that Asian carp do not enter the Great Lakes. This project will require the buy in of stakeholders from across the country and significant resources, but we must have the political will to protect our magnificent Great Lakes.

"I've lived on the Great Lakes my entire life and understand the dire need to protect and preserve them now and for generations to come, which is why I hope my colleagues join me in this important effort. The future of the Great Lakes should not be held hostage to a century old mistake and the time to act is now."

Background:

Since the 1970s, we've been working to stop Asian carp migrating up the Mississippi River watershed from invading and destroying ecosystems. Earlier this year, the Army Corps released a report to Congress outlining eight options to prevent the invasive species from entering the Great Lakes. Last week, a study conducted by the University of Notre Dame, the U.S. Forest Service and Resources for the Future identified the complete separation of the two watersheds as the most likely option to succeed. According to the study, a complete physical separation would prevent 95-100 percent of Asian carp from entering Lake Michigan.

The Defending Against Aquatic Invasive Species Act of 2014 authorizes the Secretary of the Army to completely separate the hydrologic connection between the Mississippi River and Lake Michigan, preventing the invasive species from invading the Great Lakes. If enacted, the legislation would require the Secretary to start designing the project within 180 days in consultation with important stakeholders including the governors of the surrounding states and the Great Lakes Commission. Once completed, the Secretary would have another 180 days to start construction.

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Rep. Miller's Legislation to Prevent Asian Carp from Invading Great Lakes Continues to Gain Support

WASHINGTON – Since its introduction, U.S. Representative Candice Miller's (MI-10) legislative proposal to prevent Asian carp from invading the Great Lakes, the Defending Against Aquatic Invasive Species Act of 2014 (H.R. 4001), has gained local and international support.

Detroit News Editorial: "Put a stop to Asian carp"

"Miller said she introduced the bill to give the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers the authorization to design and construct the barrier. It is the most expensive of eight alternatives the Corps detailed in a recent report on how to deal with the Asian carp and 12 other invasive species. Although the \$18.3 billion cost seems high, the stakes are even higher. The carp could destroy the \$7 billion Great Lakes commercial fishing industry and significantly alter an ecosystem that provides more than 1.5 million jobs in the United States and more than \$62 billion in wages annually."

2/15/14 - Detroit News

ConservAmerica

"If Asian carp populate the Great Lakes, it will inflict enormous damage to the region's tourism and recreation industry, one of the most important sectors in our economy. While government and NGO's have continued to study the issue, the threat grows more imminent. We applaud Rep. Miller's leadership."

2/13/14 – Rob Session, President

Detroit Area Steelheaders

"As was seen in the port communities of Lake Huron, the decline of the Salmon Fishery is an economic disaster for them and the industries related to them, and the trickledown effect to the small town, mom and pop businesses such as motels, restaurants and so on. Allowing our Great Lakes fishery, which is valued at 7 billion annually, to be exposed to this devastating threat is unfathomable. We as sportsmen and women hold sacred the natural resources of our Great Lakes and support whole heartedly the efforts of our congressional leaders to STOP these threats. The Defending Against Aquatic Invasive Species Act of 2014 sponsored by Rep. Candice Miller, provides for swift and effective measures to protect this resource."

2/13/14 - Mark R. Williams, Director and Chairman of Speakers, Education and Coalition

Michigan United Conservation Clubs

"While the \$15 billion price tag for this project is a lot of money, it pales in comparison to the damage that Asian carp would cause to the Great Lakes fishery, which is valued at \$7 billion annually. Without effective means to protect our Great Lakes and potentially inland waterways from this aquatic invasive species highway, the \$4.8 billion in retail spending by sportsmen and women and the additional \$3.2 billion per year in recreational boating-related spending and the economic ripple effect that spending has upon our state's economy will falter along with our state's tourism industry and the outdoor traditions that we treasure in Michigan. We urge your fellow Congressional and U.S. Senate colleagues to support funding necessary to undertake this initiative. Thank you for standing up in support of the Great Lakes, Michigan's sportsmen and women and the conservation of our natural resources."

2/11/14 - Erin McDonough, Executive Director

Port Huron Times Herald Editorial: "Candice Miller stands up to Asian carp menace"

"...Congress has been one of the few federal institutions to address the threat. Now there might be hope for greater action. U.S. Rep. Candice Miller has presented legislation to seal off the canals and rivers that connect to Lake Michigan and prevent Asian carp from penetrating the Great Lakes basin. ... Miller's legislation speaks to the Great Lakes' health as a whole. It is clear this precious natural resource could be undermined if something isn't done to stop Asian carp."

2/11/14 - Port Huron Times Herald

St. Clair-Detroit River Sturgeon for Tomorrow

"One of the largest threats to the lake sturgeon came as a result of ecological and habitat changes to the lakes, most of which are manmade. There are many efforts underway at the local, state, national, and international levels to restore the great lakes to conditions that existed prior to some of these changes. Much money and effort is being spent to undo some of the damage done in the past. Eliminating an artificially created pathway to the lakes is a large step in correcting past mistakes and will certainly help to protect native fauna."

2/8/14 - Jim Felgenauer, President

Traverse City Record-Eagle Editorial: "Congress finally has chance to take action on carp"

"...Miller's bill is most welcome; it represents robust action on a more reasonable timetable and also addresses the daily flow of millions of gallons of Great Lakes water into the Mississippi basin through those Chicago connections. ...Predictably, a Chicago-area business coalition said Miller's plan was too expensive and would harm the region's commercial shipping and pleasure boat industries. Compared to the damage the carp could do to the Great Lakes \$7 billion-a-year sport fishing industry, that's chump change."

2/7/14 - Traverse City Record-Eagle

Canadian Members of Parliament Larry Miller & Patricia Davidson

"I strongly support the legislation put forward by Candice Miller. There have been instances where the current protection system has failed and Asian carp seen to find a way into the Great Lakes. I fully agree that total separation is the only way to ensure that Asian carp do not enter the Great Lakes."

2/6/14 - Larry Miller, MP

"...I wholeheartedly support this bill so that we can ensure the productivity and sustainability of our mutual recreational and commercial fishing industries across the entirety of the Great Lakes. ...Our two countries have to do everything in our powers to prevent the Asian Carp from reaching the Great Lakes, and I fully support the construction of a physical barrier fully separating the infested waterways."

2/7/14 - Patricia Davidson, MP

The Great Lakes Fishery Commission

"Candice Miller's legislation is the important 'next step' needed to keep this long-term, difficult process moving forward. ...The Great Lakes need protection from harmful invasive species like Asian carp and snakehead. Several studies have concluded that the CAWS leaves the Great Lakes and Mississippi basins at significant risk from the movement of aquatic invaders. The CAWS pathway must be addressed for the protection of the \$7 billion fishery, the ecology of the region, and the millions of people who depend on the lakes for livelihoods, recreation, transportation, drinking water, and myriad other uses."

2/6/14 - Robert Lambe, Executive Secretary of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission

Michigan State House of Representatives

"Our waterways are valuable both economically and environmentally. I am thankful for the support of my colleagues in the Michigan House of Representatives and I am looking forward to working with our congressional delegation as we work to protect Michigan's priceless resource. "

2/25/14 - House Natural Resources Committee, State Rep. Andrea LaFontaine of Columbus Township

Huron County Board of Commissioners

"...the Huron County Board of Commissioners fully supports HR 4001 to authorize projects necessary to separate the hydrologic connection between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins to prevent the interbasin transfer of aquatic invasive species."

2/25/14 - Commission Resolution No. 14-27C

Toledo Blade Editorial: Stopping the carp

"...U.S. Rep. Candice Miller (R., Mich.) has introduced a bill that would require the corps to take immediate action to close off the series of canals that connect the Mississippi River with the Great Lakes, which were dug more than a century ago. Illinois and Indiana politicians oppose the measure, instead defending barge and shipping interests whose bottom line could be hurt if they had to move their cargo overland. They have a point. But their inconvenience would be minor compared to the economic loss the nation would suffer — forever — if Asian carp establish themselves in the world's most important supply of freshwater."

2/26/14 - Toledo Blade

Clay Township Board of Trustees

"...Clay Township has over 27 miles of shoreline along the St. Clair River and Lake St. Clair and is the base for our tourism industry that includes roadside parks, and several water sports, such as kayaking, fishing charters, swimming and boating; and the spread of Asian carp further into the Great Lakes would devastate these activities..."

3/17/14 – Clay Township Board of Trustees Resolution

Sanilac County Board of Commissioners

"Sanilac County has over 36 miles of shoreline along Lake Huron and is the base for our tourism industry that includes roadside parks, beaches, and several water sports, such as kayaking, fishing charters, and boating; and the spread of Asian carp further into the Great Lakes would devastate these activities ...the Sanilac County Board of Commissioners fully support H.R. 4001 to authorize projects necessary to separate the hydrologic connection between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins to prevent the interbasin transfer of aquatic invasive species."

3/18/14 – Sanilac County Board of Commissioners Resolution

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